

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING EXPLAINED

Neighbourhood Planning is a community-led planning tool introduced by Government in the 2011 Localism Act. Neighbourhood Plans are part of a raft of community rights to enable local communities to better shape their places, working with/through a local parish council.

Neighbourhood Plans are planning-based documents – a plan’s planning policies are at the heart of the plan and have statutory status once the plan is finally ‘adopted’ (i.e. ‘made’) as part of the wider development plan for the area – in Sherburn’s case the ‘Selby Local Plan’. In other words, they are used by Selby planners to help decide on all planning applications in Sherburn.

- *A Neighbourhood Plan can be used to decide where new development takes place (e.g. local needs housing); what type it should be (i.e. mix of housing) and what it should look like (layout and design).*
- *It can also address other matters of local interest such as open space (e.g. protecting existing; providing new); community facilities (i.e. what’s lacking; where could facilities be developed) and local traffic and transport (e.g. car parking, cross-village routes).*

Neighbourhood Plans also provide the opportunity for communities to set out other non-planning actions and aspirations (i.e. these are non-statutory) so that the resultant plan presents a holistic framework for the future of an area over the next 15 years or so (up to 2040 in the case of this plan). They might for example be about bus routes/services or youth nights at a community centre.

WARNING: A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN IS NOT A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER!

It cannot be used to stop development already allocated in the Local Plan, or permitted (via planning permission) or propose less development than that in the Local Plan. It could, however, propose more development than the Local Plan if a community was so minded.

It can allocate sites for development, BUT this involves a lot of expensive, background technical work and will slow the process down. It may also bring different parts of the community into conflict with each other and/or the town council – this could ultimately result in problems at referendum stage.

Affordable Housing is often an issue communities say they want to tackle in Neighbourhood Plans. Be aware that it has a very specific and long legal definition. Also that Local Plan policies tend to be comprehensive on this topic, so that unless you can identify an obvious gap in coverage or provide evidence as to why Sherburn policy should vary from the Local Plan, there is normally little or nothing you can add to the Local Plan. When people say ‘affordable housing’, what they often mean is cheap housing for local people.

KEY FUTURE STAGES

- Statutory ‘Regulation 14’ consultation – 6 weeks
- Submission to NYC
- Independent examination (examined against the ‘basic conditions’ – takes account of national planning policy; in general conformity with strategic elements of the Local Plan – no conflict or duplication; contributes to sustainable development; doesn’t breach European Conservation and Habitat Regulations; compatible with European Human Rights requirements).
- Referendum
- Making of Plan – ‘adoption’

TYPICAL THEMATIC AREAS FOR A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1. Natural environment and green spaces
2. Recreational and community facilities
3. Town centre
4. Development design
5. Conservation, Character Areas
6. Housing mix, design, affordability
7. Economic development/employment sites
8. Traffic management (transport)(highways)
9. Countryside management, rights of way

Your Plan can be focused or broad – it is whichever the community prioritises.

But critical to understand that the Neighbour Plan is owned by you the Town Council.

REFERENDUM

A final word about the Referendum that concludes the process – successfully we hope!
It will run by NYC exactly the same as any other local poll.

50%+1 voting in favour makes the Plan.

However, it goes without saying that your communication and engagement strategy throughout the Planning process will ensure that firstly you get a solid turnout and secondly giving you a solid majority, thereby validating the Plan as strongly as possible.

The question on the ballot paper will be:

Do you want North Yorkshire Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Sherburn in Elmet to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?

*David Gluck, Appointed Planning Consultant
29th January 2024*